

## PUBLIC LANDS IN FORT LEWIS MILITARY RESERVATION.

MARCH 30, 1896.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union and ordered to be printed.

Mr. SHAFROTH, from the Committee on the Public Lands, submitted the following

### REPORT:

[To accompany H. R. 5481.]

The Committee on the Public Lands, to whom was referred the bill (H. R. 5481) to restore the lands embraced in the Fort Lewis military reservation in the State of Colorado to the public domain, having duly considered the same, do report :

The Fort Lewis military reservation was established by Executive order January 27, 1882, embracing 47.4 square miles of the public domain.

On the 12th day of November, 1891, long after said premises had been abandoned for military purposes, the Secretary of War turned all of the buildings, improvements, and premises over to the Secretary of the Interior for industrial school purposes for educating Indians, and all of the improvements and the lands upon which they are situated and the lands adjacent thereto are now used by the Government for an Indian industrial school, and all such premises and improvements are excluded herefrom, to wit, sections 33, 34, and 35 in township 35 north, range 11 west; sections 9, 10, 11, and 12 in township 34 north of range 11 west, and what will be, when surveyed, sections numbers 1, 2, 3, and 4 in township 34 north, of range 11 west:

The foregoing bill was submitted to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, and he selected the foregoing premises and informed the committee that the same would be ample for this purpose.

This reservation is near the headwaters of the La Plata River, in the mountainous mining district of Colorado, called the San Juan; it is not in an agricultural country, but in the mining region of Colorado, although a very little of this reservation can be tilled and will produce such crops as will mature in an elevation 8,000 feet above sea level. Such tillable land, however, is found in small patches, the most of said reservation being rough mountainous territory only fit for mining, if good for any purpose; that the value of these lands has not been accelerated by contiguous settlement, as is usual in level agricultural countries; that it can not be put up and sold to advantage by the Government; that it is desirable, however, that it be thrown open to settlement under existing laws, that it may be prospected and located by miners if desired; and such as can be cultivated, or that may be found more valuable for other purposes than mining, may be located for such purposes under general land laws.

Therefore the committee recommends that said bill be amended by inserting after the word "purposes" in the fifth line of the second section the following, "to wit, sections thirty-three, thirty-four, and thirty-five in township thirty-five north of range eleven west; also sections nine, ten, eleven, and twelve in township thirty-four north of range eleven west, and also what will be sections one, two, three, and four in township thirty-four north of range eleven west when surveyed." Also by inserting after the last word of said bill the following, "and excluding all general school sections."

And your committee recommend that the bill as so amended do pass.